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Executive Summary

The Selective Harvest Program for moose in Ontario was introduced by the MNR in 1983. Previous harvest management programs, such as season manipulation and fixed-ratio systems (the "buddy system") had failed to regulate the harvest of moose and contribute to increasing the provincial moose population. Under the selective harvest program, the quota of adult moose which may be harvested is based on the moose population density and the target population density for the WMU. In turn, the quota of adult validation tags available is calculated using the harvest quota and the average hunter success rate for the WMU. Tags are allocated to resident hunters via the Adult Moose Validation Tag Draw.

In 1983, the moose draw was conducted as a random computer draw process. In 1984, the draw program was amended to allow a preference pooling system wherein applicants who applied in the draw the previous year and were unsuccessful in obtaining a validation tag were given preference in the draw (the preference pool). Hunter satisfaction with the draw has varied from year to year and from region to region. In 1987, the MNR conducted a review called "Improving the quality and enjoyment of moose hunting within the Selective Harvest System". As a result of this review, the MNR made, and subsequently fulfilled, commitments to notify unsuccessful applicants after the draw, allocate surplus tags, introduce party hunting for adult moose, develop an advanced moose hunter education program, and develop a group application system for the draw.

In January of 1991, a public review of the draw system was initiated. The review consisted of a series of public meetings in 14 communities. The objective of the review was to assess public opinion regarding the moose draw and related moose hunting issues, and to assess the suitability of a proposed Group Application System. Ministry staff, in consultation with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, had developed the group system as an addition to the existing draw system; this group system would distribute tags in a more equitable manner.

Hunters were informed of the meetings by newspaper advertising, public service announcements on radio, news releases and subsequent newspaper articles, radio interviews, and solicited magazine articles. In each Region, specific hunter organizations also received a personal invitation to attend the meetings.

The meetings were conducted informally. Each meeting was opened with a few introductory and explanatory remarks, after which the floor was opened for presentations. Written presentations were also accepted. Background material on the review process, the current draw system and the proposed group application system were made available at the meetings. MNR staff from the local office and Wildlife Policy Branch were present to record comments and answer questions. A brief explanation of the current draw and the proposed group application systems was given by Ministry staff at each meeting. The meetings were attended by over 4,000 individuals, and 240 written submissions were received.

The results of the review demonstrated support for the group application system and the introduction of this system in 1992 was announced by the Minister in March, 1991. The results also showed that hunters were generally dissatisfied with the tag allocation system, although support for the system was evident in areas where hunters were drawing tags frequently. Some of the other issues raised by hunters were: alternative moose allocation systems, problems with the draw application procedure, party hunting regulations, local area applicant draw preference, and problems with MNR/Hunter communication.

Recommendations

1) Group Application System:

As previously announced, the Group Application System will be introduced in 1992. This will result in a better distribution of tags.

2) Party Hunting Regulations:

a) with respect to parties of hunters who apply to the draw as a group, the tag should be transferred to another member of the applying group under certain circumstances.

b) consistent enforcement policies for party hunting should be communicated to all moose hunters and conservation officers.

3) Diseased Moose:

A policy should be developed stating that in cases where a hunter has harvested an adult moose which is infested with parasites or disease to the extent that the carcass is unfit for consumption, the Ministry should issue a second licence and validation tag to the hunter.

4) Sportsman's Card:

A feasibility study on the Sportsman's card concept should be prepared for consideration by the Minister. A sportsman's card would make licence issuing easier and quicker, would reduce draw application errors, and may serve to assure hunters of the fairness of the computer draw.

5) MNR/Hunter Communication:

Beginning with the introduction of the Group Application System, permanent communication strategies for transmitting information to hunters should be established in the form of local MNR/hunter committees. Publication of moose hunting season dates should be done by the December preceding the hunt, and population and hunt statistics should be published each year.

6) Disabled Hunters:

Special consideration should be considered for mobility-impaired disabled hunters, enabling them to hunt with a gun during the special bow season, dependent on the outcome of future pilot projects.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Moose in Ontario

Moose have existed in Ontario since at least the retreat of Wisconsin glaciation about 10,000 years ago, and were probably present in prehistoric times dating back to the Pleistocene era. At the time of European discovery, moose were common on the Precambrian shield south of Lake Nipissing and the Ottawa river. Distribution in northern Ontario was extensive; moose were common at Lac Seul in 1803 and meat and hides of moose were traded at Lake Nipigon in 1804.

Moose figured prominently in the economy of Ontario in the early 1800's, but by 1830 no meat or skins were traded. In settled areas moose declined following settlement, and a general population decline in northern and north-western Ontario seems to have occurred in the mid-1800's. Native people in northwestern Ontario reported a general decline of moose in the mid to late 1800's. Extensive commercial utilization of moose to supply survey crews, prospectors, railroad builders and settlers may have contributed to this decline. By 1888 there was sufficient concern that a complete prohibition on moose hunting was decreed from 1888-1895. In 1892 a special government commission, set up to investigate future prospects for Wildlife species, reported that moose would become endangered if illegal killing were not stopped. By the early 1900's moose had once again re-populated most of northern Ontario.

The northern increase in moose numbers peaked in the 1920's and declined again in the 1930's and 1940's. In 1949-50 the hunting season was again closed and a study was undertaken by the Department of Lands and Forests to evaluate the decline. The season was reopened in 1951 and the Department began developing moose population census methods. The moose population seems to have increased again during the 1950's and by 1959, when the Department conducted it's first aerial inventory, there were an estimated 125,000 moose in the province.

In the early 1970's, it became evident that the moose population was again declining. Although loss of habitat, predation or disease may have contributed to this decline, the most obvious reason was increased hunting pressure. The number of moose hunting licenses sold increased from 36,160 in 1960 to 90,684 in 1975. Analysis also showed a high proportion of adult cows in the kill, while the least valuable component of the herd, the calves, were under-represented.

1.2 Moose Management in Ontario 1974 - 1982

In 1974, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) began hiring biologists whose jobs were specifically related to managing moose. A land based system of Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) were established in 1975 as a basis upon which to manage the moose population. Legislation was such, however, that harvest control was limited to the manipulation of season existence, length and timing. The moose population declined 35% between 1964 and 1979,

although this time the major cause was identified as excessive harvest of the breeding component of the herd and poorly distributed hunting pressure.

The development of new moose management strategies was undertaken in 1979. In 1979-80, 72 public meetings were held across the province to discuss a range of moose management options developed by the MNR. Presented at these meetings were six different strategies to reduce the harvest and redistribute hunting pressure. The public response indicated a strong preference for changes in season structure, followed by selective harvesting and controlled hunting. The least favoured method was season closure. The majority of hunters who favoured controlled hunting as a means of regulating hunting pressure selected lottery draw as the best way to allocate the special licenses. Improving harvest assessment methods, better habitat management, increased enforcement, expanded hunter education and predator control programs were also strongly supported by participants at these meetings. It was also a result of surveys conducted at these meetings that the figure of 10% allocation of the moose resource to the tourism industry was first suggested.

In 1980, two significant developments occurred in Ontario moose management. The first was the approval of a provincial moose management policy which set out clear targets for the moose program, one of which was to increase the number of moose in Ontario from the current estimate of less then 80,000 to 160,000 by the year 2000. The second development was the introduction of the two-coupon per moose system, or "buddy-system" as it became known. This program succeeded in reducing the total harvest in the first two years, but by 1982 the harvest had attained previous levels. The buddy system also resulted in an increase in the number of adult cow moose taken. This system was abandoned after three seasons to make way for a more biologically sound system of harvest management called selective harvest.

1.3 Selective Harvest Program

The Selective Harvest Program was introduced by the MNR in 1983. The program works by placing limits on the harvest of animals with the highest reproductive potential, namely adults, and particularly cows. No limit is placed on the harvest of calf moose because of their low reproductive potential and the traditionally small percentage of the annual harvest which they comprise. Limits and target populations exist for each Wildlife Management Unit (WMU).

The quota of moose which may be harvested is based on the moose population density and the target population density for the WMU. In turn, the quota of adult validation tags available is calculated using the harvest quota and the average hunter success rate for the WMU.
Ontario residents are allocated approximately 90% of the planned provincial bull and cow harvest through the Adult Moose Validation Tag Draw. The remaining 10% is allotted to the tourism industry via the Tag Share Program. These percentages are for the entire moose range. They vary by WMU according to the traditional relative use by resident hunters and outfitters.

1.4 The Adult Moose Validation Tag Draw

The adult moose validation tag draw is the method employed to allocate adult moose hunting opportunities to resident hunters. In 1983, the draw was conducted as a random computer draw process. Applicants did not have to purchase their licence prior to obtaining a draw application form, and 87,430 of applications were received the first year (in 1983, the number of moose hunters in the province was estimated to be 79,142).

In 1984, applicants were required to purchase their licence prior to obtaining a draw application form, in order to ensure that only serious moose hunters would apply. Also, the draw program was amended to allow a preference pooling system wherein applicants who applied in the draw the previous year and were unsuccessful in obtaining a validation tag were given preference in the draw (the preference pool). All other applicants were placed in the second, non-preference pool. The application form for the draw permitted two choices of either bull or cow, in two WMUs. An applicant could also specify bow season preference for either or both choices. The draw program allocated tags on a random basis, first within the preference pool of applicants for each category and type of tag, and then, if there were tags remaining, in the second pool of applicants. In reality there may be a total of 16 draws in a given WMU: Pool 1, Choice 1; Pool 1, Choice 2; Pool 2, Choice 1; Pool 2, Choice 2, - for both the bull and cow quota of tags for both the regular gun and bow season.

Currently, the per cent chance of receiving of tag in a given WMU is dependent on the pool status of the applicant, the number of tags available and the number of other applicants.

In 1990, 90,007 applicants applied for the available quota of 31,492 adult moose validation tags. 28,050 tags were allocated in the draw and 1,100 were allocated via the subsequent Surplus Tag Allocation System. (This surplus tag line system allocates tags which were left-over after the draw to unsuccessful draw applicants. The allocation mechanism is first-come, first-served, via telephone lines during a limited time period in August. All of the tags are for undersubscribed WMUs - usually remote or bows-only.)

Quality tests are conducted on the draw results prior to release. Bias tests are performed for licence number, first letter of last name, and date-of-birth. All tags are manually inspected for accuracy before they are mailed out.

Hunter satisfaction with the draw has varied from year to year and from region to region. In 1983, the first year of the draw, an error in the computer program resulted in an unfair draw: all hunters over a certain age were successful in receiving a tag. A second, corrected draw was held. This second draw resulted in a more fair distribution of tags but also resulted in a large overharvest of moose. Reductions in tag quotas in subsequent years were due partially to this overharvest. Underestimates of hunter success rates also contributed to reductions in tag quotas. In 1983 the quota of tags allocated was over 54,000 and in 1990 the figure had been reduced to 28,740. Since the number of applicants to the draw has increased in most WMUs, while the

overall quota of tags has decreased, the percent chance of receiving a tag has declined significantly. This means that in some WMUs, it is possible for a hunter to apply to the draw for several consecutive years without success. It is in these oversubscribed WMUs where hunters have expressed the strongest dissatisfaction with the draw process.

1.5 1987 Review

In 1987, the MNR conducted a review called "Improving the quality and enjoyment of moose hunting within the Selective Harvest System". In this review, the MNR first produced a background document which outlined the relevant issues and possible solutions related to the moose hunt. This document was then reviewed in workshop format by "regional advisory committees" comprised of selected moose hunters. These committees made a series of recommendations which were packaged into programs by the MNR. The MNR then conducted a mailed survey of draw applicants and the results were tabulated. As a result of this review, the MNR made, and subsequently fulfilled, commitments to notify unsuccessful applicants after the draw, allocate surplus tags, introduce party hunting for adult moose, develop an advanced moose hunter education program, and develop a group application system for the draw.

1.6 1991 Review of the Adult Moose Validation Tag Draw

In December of 1990, the Minister initiated a public review of the draw system. The review would be in the form of a series of public meetings in 14 communities. The objective of the review was to assess public opinion regarding the moose draw and related moose hunting issues, and to assess the suitability of a proposed Group Application System. Ministry staff, in consultation with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, had developed the group system as an addition to the existing draw system; this group system would distribute tags in a more equitable manner.

Hunters were informed of the meetings by newspaper advertising, public service announcements on radio, news releases and subsequent newspaper articles, radio interviews, and solicited magazine articles. In each Region, specific hunter organizations also received a personal invitation to attend the meetings.

The format of the meetings was informal. Each was opened meeting with a few introductory and explanatory remarks, after which the floor was opened for presentations. Written presentations were also accepted. Background material on the review process, the current draw system and the proposed group application system were made available at the meetings. MNR staff from the local office and Wildlife Policy Branch were present to record comments and answer questions. A brief explanation of the current draw and the proposed group application systems was given by Ministry staff at each meeting.

The meetings were attended by over 4,000 individuals and 240 written submissions were received.

1.7 Group Application System

As a result of a preliminary analysis of the results of the public meetings, the Minister announced on March 20th that a group application system would be introduced in 1992.

The system will be based on the existing draw and preference pooling structure, with two major modifications: using special envelopes supplied from the ministry, hunters will be encouraged to apply in groups of from 1 to 8 hunters. When one member of a group is successful, the other members will be removed from the draw. This will prevent groups from receiving more than one tag but will increase the number of groups with a tag. In addition, each step of the draw, the computer will calculate the ratio of tags to applicants, and a tag will automatically be allocated to each group with a number of members equal to or greater than the ratio. This step will reduce the incidence of larger groups not receiving a tag due to the random draw. Applications from individuals will be accepted and an individuals chance of success in the draw will not be reduced by the group system. A detailed outline of how the group application system will function in 1992 is contained in Appendix I.

The following is the rationale (from the preliminary report) for the decision to introduce the system in 1991.

The meeting results regarding the group system can be placed in three categories:

1) comments reflecting basic positive or negative feelings regarding the system;

Positive comments - the majority (59%) of comments regarding the value of the group system were positive, although there were few moose hunters who said "it is a good thing - do it". Most hunters who made positive comments seemed to feel that it would increase the fairness of the tag distribution to some hunters in some WMUs. The written submissions received demonstrated a higher degree of support (66% in favour) for the system. This may reflect more thoughtful input since most hunters at the meetings were asked to quickly digest how the group system would work and make immediate comments, whereas those who wrote in after the meeting presumably had more time to consider the system.

Negative comments - negative comments regarding the group system centred on its connection to the current draw system, the additional degree of complexity it would add to the draw, and its continuation of the principles of selective harvest.

2) questions regarding specific aspects of the group system;

The existing draw system is complicated and the group application system adds another level of complexity. To further aggravate the lack of understanding of the group system, many hunters at the meetings demonstrated by their statements that they did not understand how the current draw system worked. This situation led to there being several basic questions on the functioning

of the current draw and group system at most meetings. There were also questions regarding how the tag could be used, once allocated to a member of the group.

3) comments on specific aspects of the group system;

The most common comment from hunters who understood how the system would work was regarding the regulation requiring the presence of the tag-holder in the field at the time the adult animal was harvested. Transferability of tags was a concern for many hunters because of timing of their holidays, work schedules during the hunt, etc.. There were four options regarding introducing the group system:

Introduce the Group Application System as developed, in 1991

Allocate tags to groups by linking members of groups with a number and then removing all members from the draw when one is successful.

PROS:

- would have resulted in a better distribution of tags if hunters applied in groups,
- would have appeared that the MNR was responding to the concerns of moose hunters,

CONS:

- time was running short to properly educate hunters on how the system would work,
- would have no effect on tag distribution if hunters did not apply in groups as a result of lack of understanding,
- the speed of implementation may have generated the perception that the decision was made prior to the review,
- it may not have addressed all the concerns which arose in the review.

Introduce the group system in 1991 with modifications

PROS:

- would have resulted in a better tag distribution,
- would have appeared that the MNR was responding to the concerns of moose hunters,

CONS:

- due to time constraints, it was not possible to modify the proposal or change the computer program/system as developed,

(- see above CONS under introducing the system, as is, in 1991)

Introduce the group system with modifications in 1992 (regular draw process occurs in 1991)

PROS:

- permits time for the MNR to assess the suitability of the current proposal in light of the review and make appropriate changes,
- permits time to fully educate hunters about the system,
- reduces the number of annual changes to draw system if the review results recommend further alterations to the allocation system or attendant regulations,

CONS:

- a one year delay in changes to the allocation system,
- keeps the debate on this issue open for a longer period.

Do not introduce the group application system in 1991 or 1992

PROS:

- permits an alternate tag allocation system to be developed,
- will satisfy a small number of hunters.

CONS:

- no improvement in tag distribution in 1991 or 1992.

There were three basic problems with implementing the group system in 1991. First, there was very little time to educate hunters on how the system would work. Wildlife Policy Branch was planning on conducting an education campaign during the period in which this review was held. Since understanding of the group system at the meetings came only after MNR staff had verbally explained the system and answered questions, it was felt that a one-time mailing of written material to all moose hunters (the only method available in this time frame) would not be effective. If introduced, the Ministry would need to embark on an education campaign with moose hunters covering several months and involving personal meetings with as many organized hunt groups as possible.

The second problem with implementing the group system in 1991 was that it may not have fully met the needs of moose hunters. For example, it was a concern of hunters at most of the 14 meetings that any member of the party should be able to fill the adult tag without the member being present in the field at the time of the hunt. There are several methods of accommodating this request but most require changes to the existing computer program. Also, there is much support from northwestern and north central area hunters that the draw itself should remain as is or that the group system should only be implemented in areas where it is necessary (i.e. northeastern Ontario).

The third problem with implementing the group application system for the 1991 was that the review would have lacked credibility if a previously developed, potentially inadequate system with little public support, were introduced less than two weeks after the last of the public meetings.

The decision announced by the Minister in the Legislature on March 20, 1991, was to introduce the proposed group application system in 1992 after an extensive hunter awareness campaign.

2.0 REVIEW ISSUES

2.1 Selective Harvest and Alternatives

There were few comments about the selective harvest system, per se, during the review. Hunters in many areas commented that they are seeing more moose each year, and this was interpreted as a supportive comment for the biological success of the program. At three meetings and in several written submissions, hunters made mention of the lack of protection afforded calf moose. Hunters are traditionally reluctant to harvest young-of-the-year because of the intuitive perception that these animals are required for recruitment into the population. Although MNR wildlife managers have been encouraging hunters to harvest more calves as a means of maintaining hunter opportunities in an adult-limited harvest situation, hunters have been slow to actively participate in this philosophy. Hunters may also be reluctant to attempt to harvest calves because of the difficulty in "knowing the difference" (an MNR selective harvest program promotional slogan), that is, distinguishing between calves and cows.

There are alternatives to a selective harvest system. Some of the systems discussed below have been used before in Ontario, others have not.

2.1.1 Calf-Only Hunting

Calf-only hunting is a theoretically effective management tool. Using all information available, managers have constructed a computer model of a calf-only harvest. Birth rates and death rates and estimates of predation, poaching, and hunter kill, as well as other factors that influence moose, were used. The initial population in this example was 50,000 animals.

If a hunting season restricted to calves had been instituted in Ontario in 1980, a total of about 110,000 calves could theoretically have been harvested between 1980 and 1990, still allowing the population to increase. During this time, allowing for current losses to predation, winter and disease to occur at the present rate, a herd of 50,000 could have been expected to grow to 80,000.

This example of a calf-only hunt would provide a growing herd and an annual harvest in 1990 of 15,000 to 16,000 animals, all calves. This figure would be significantly higher than the current annual Ontario harvest, which is about 10,000 moose including all ages.

2.1.2 Bull-Only Hunting

According to computer models, when a season restricted to bulls is imposed on 50,000 moose, the results seem good for the first four to six years. In that time, the herd grows and the harvest is maintained at a level that would bring hunter satisfaction. Then trouble begins. Between the fifth and seventh years, the number of bulls available to mate becomes too low and many cows go unbred. In years eight, nine, and ten, the herd stops growing and begins to decline. Bull-only hunts are not going to be effective in rebuilding a moose herd. If the same herd were exposed to a harvest restricted to both bulls and calves, a total of about 110,000 animals could be harvested in the same 10-year period from the starting population of 50,000. The population, however, would grow to about 120,000 animals, or one and one-half times the size of the herd under a harvest restricted to calves only. The reason for the difference is that some of the bulls would replace some of the calves in the kill. As long as proper habitat is available, and predation is not excessive, more calves would be left to mature and to reproduce. As long as enough bulls are still present to successfully mate with the mature females, the loss of those that are harvested does not prevent the population from growing.

2.1.3 Season Manipulation

The manipulation of season existence, timing and length was the primary management tool employed by the wildlife managers in Ontario up to 1980. Season manipulation was ineffective in stemming the decline of the moose population because it could not prevent overharvesting as moose hunter numbers increased. Extremely short seasons of 2-3 days duration may reduce the total harvest to some extent. However, the extent of the harvest reduction would be insignificant since, where there are long seasons, the greatest percentage of the harvest occurs in the first few days of the hunt.

2.1.4 Wide Open Moose Hunting

Hunters at one public meeting commented that they preferred the option of wide-open moose hunting. At the Timmins meeting, several hunters stated "we just want to be able to shoot any moose", and this seemed to be the prevailing attitude when this issue arose. Hunter numbers are too high and modern hunters are too successful to allow this option. If permitted, wide-open moose hunting would result in a decline in the moose population. Some sort of control over the extent of the harvest is required.

Computer models indicate that with an any-moose hunt, with unlimited hunter participation, the herd will indeed decline (see section 2.3.1 for a discussion of limited entry, any-moose seasons). The any-moose system was the hunting system in effect in Ontario for 30 years. During that period the harvest remained relatively stable because as one area became depleted of moose, new forest access roads allowed hunters into previously unhunted areas.

If an any-moose harvest were to continue at current levels of hunter numbers, the moose herd would start to decline immediately. Applying this scenario to the same 10-year period of population modelling, about 80,000 animals would have been harvested, and at the cost of a severely reduced population. After 10 years, the original 50,000 moose would be reduced to about 35,000. In order for the population to grow, the number of animals killed would have to be reduced substantially.

2.2 The Draw

In the Kenora, Dryden and Thunder Bay meetings, there was close to unanimous consent among participants (as best as could be assessed) that the moose program should be "left the same". This was not an unanticipated response at these meetings since in northwestern Ontario WMUs, most applicants to the draw receive tags at least every second year (a frequency generally perceived to be "fair").

There was little public support for the current draw system evident at the meetings in the northern/northeastern part of the province, or in the written submissions from those areas. There exists a common perception in these areas that the draw is not fair because, due to the random nature of tag allocation, all hunters do not receive tags with the same frequency. The number of tags available and the number of hunters dictate that in the north and northeast, the majority of hunters will be successful in the draw on an interval of 3-6 years.

Some hunters who do receive tags frequently still do not feel the draw is fair because they know of hunters who have worse luck then themselves. As well, there are many rumours which circulate each year which suggest the draw is unfair (e.g. "only hunters in the south get tags", "you have to know someone to get a tag", etc.) A good example of hunters misleading one another about the fairness of the draw was experienced at one meeting where an individual spoke eloquently several times about the obvious unfairness of the draw since he had twice applied for two consecutive years and not received a tag in a WMU where the published statistics stated that he should receive a tag at least every second year. After the meeting, an audit of this individual's draw application history revealed that he had been allocated a tag in six of eight years and had never gone two consecutive years without receiving a tag. He had purposely misled other moose hunters.

Many hunters know draw applicants who have experienced poorer luck tha the published statistics suggest should occur, and these are often expanded to be the generality. In such cases the applicants may truly be "unlucky" (i.e. in pool one but never successful in a WMU with annual P1C1 percent chance of success of 50%), or, as is more often the case according to application audits, the applicant did not apply, applied late, or filed an incomplete application. Many hunters do not really seem to care <u>why</u> they have not received a tag: they just want a tag.

The draw process would receive more support if every hunter received a tag with a frequency which was perceived as fair. Hunters do seem to accept the concept of receiving a tag less

frequently in WMUs where hunter numbers and success rates are high and tag quotas are relatively low. They are willing to "wait their turn" for their own tag as long as they still have the opportunity to hunt for adult moose on another party member's tag.

There are not enough tags to satisfy individual demand in some WMUs, especially in the northern and northeastern areas of the province. There are probably enough tags, if "spread thinly" to permit the majority of moose hunters to at least party hunt for adult moose each year. It is anticipated that the group application system would result in a distribution of tags which will result in most hunters having access to an adult tag.

2.3 Alternatives to Draws

Alternatives to draws exist. Controlled hunts and fixed ratio systems permit some control of the harvest but have advantages and disadvantages. Other alternative systems to draws are possible: lucky scratch boxes on the licenses for bull/cow/calf; first-come, first-served for tag allocation at a set location or via phone-in. These alternatives have not been investigated seriously because of their logistical problems and in some cases because of poor harvest control.

2.3.1 Controlled Hunts

It is possible to control the number of moose harvested by controlling the number of hunters. In a controlled hunt, the number of hunters permitted to hunt moose in a given area is restricted. The number of moose harvested is controlled by permits (bull, cow, calf permits could be used) and there is usually mandatory registration of kill. The hunt may also be ended when a given harvest level is achieved.

A controlled hunt for moose occurs every few years in the LaRose forest of Cornwall District where a small, isolated population of moose is located.

Controlled hunts were an alternative discussed with hunters in 1980, who rejected it in favour of selective harvest.

Controlled Hunts for Moose

PROS:

- provides very primitive limits on harvest,

CONS:

- many hunters could not participate in the hunt annually, therefore it would intensify, not rectify major current complaints,

2.3.2 Fixed-Ratio Systems

In a fixed ratio system, x number of hunters must place their game seal on each harvested moose. The "buddy system" of the early 1980's was a fixed ratio system in which two hunters' seals were required on each harvested moose. A fixed ratio system was suggested at most meetings and in many written submissions.

Fixed-Ratio Harvest System

PROS:

- popular idea with some hunters,
- administratively easy and inexpensive,

CONS:

- ineffective in controlling extent, location or composition of harvest, and thus population targets would not be met,
- already tried in early 1980's and abandoned,
- much criticism of the system before it was abandoned.

2.4 Alternative Types of Draws

There are a wide variety of possible types of draws which could be used to allocated planned harvests. The group application system discussed in section 1.6 is the alternative that has been chosen for the 1992 allocation. It is fundamentally different from the existing draw because it identifies and allocates tags on the basis of groups of hunters as well as individuals.

2.4.1 Multi-Year Pooling Systems

A multi-year pooling system is a draw which gives additional preference for each year that an applicant has been unsuccessful. For example, an applicant who has been unsuccessful in the draw for four years would have preference over an applicant who has been in the draw for two years. This system was suggested by hunters in public meetings and in written responses.

Multi-Year Pooling

PROS:

- increase in hunter perception of draw fairness.

CONS:

- hunters may still wait 3-6 years between tags,
- difficult to "track" hunters for a number of years,

- many hunters seem to prefer a more frequent chance of a tag rather than a guaranteed tag potentially less frequently,
- very expensive to administer,
- nature of complaints would change to pool status related concerns.

2.5 Preference

The current draw gives preference only to those applicants who applied to the draw in the previous year and were unsuccessful. The 1992 group application system draw will also give preference to groups who have a number of applicants within a given draw step (i.e. WMU X, gun bull, P1C1) greater than the ratio of applicants to tags.

Special preference was requested by resident hunters for local residents (and non-locals at the London meeting), residents within the WMU, residents of northern Ontario, disabled hunters, and elderly hunters. The MNR's current policy is that the only hunters who receive preference are those who applied in the draw the previous year and were unsuccessful.

Technically, it is easy to alter the draw programming to give preference to one group over another. The computer can reference an applicant's age from the application and allocate tags to older hunters first, or the postal code on the application can be used to give preference based on location of mailing address.

2.5.1 Age Preference

This type of preference was requested at two meetings and in two written responses. Generally, the requested preference was for elderly hunters over the age of 65.

Preference for Hunters Older than 65 Years

PROS:

- perceived as fair to some hunters,

CONS:

- perceived as unfair by other hunters,
- does not result in a "better" distribution of tags, just a different one.

2.5.2 Geographic Preference

Local resident preference for tags was suggested at 10 Ontario meetings, including nine northern Ontario meetings; hunters in the north were generally more forceful in their expression of dislike/distrust of the draw system. More northern hunters expressed a desire or need to obtain moose meat than southern hunters, while southern hunters claimed that the sport aspect of the

hunt was their predominant motive. Northern hunters cited "southern hunters" for poor manners when hunting moose in the north. The also had the perception that the hunters in southern Ontario are more influential with the MNR and a related perception is that residents of northern Ontario are "always being told what to do by southern Ontario" was also voiced.

Hunters in the north generally feel they have a greater right to the moose resource than residents of the south. At several meetings hunters pointed out that they choose to live in the north for the recreational opportunities, such as moose hunting, which exist there. Hunters from the south, they say, only think of moose hunting as a vacation, not their reason for spending their lives in a given area. Northern hunters also feel they have to rely more on providing meat for the table aspect of the hunt and less on the "sport" aspect of the hunt then hunters from the south. It follows for them, then, that providing food is more important than sport.

Residents of northern Ontario have a sense of ownership for the moose resource because their occupations and daily life frequently bring them in contact with moose or moose habitat. It is therefore aggravating to a local area residents to be unsuccessful in the draw and then see hunters from other parts of Ontario come and take "their moose".

There is also a perception among northern hunters that southern hunters get all the tags in the draw. Hunters from southern Ontario generally are not willing to travel extensive distances to hunt moose unless they have a member of their party who was successful in the draw. Northern hunters have concluded that all parties of hunters from the south have tags, because all parties of southern hunters with which they come into contact have tags. As well, parties of hunters from the south tend to be larger and the chances of one of their members being successful increases with party size.

Bias tests are conducted on the draw results to ensure preference has not been given based on area of residence. This means that the number of tags allocated to residents of a given area is proportional to the number of applications from that area. Since 1983, several sportsman's clubs, all in northern communities, have asked to see the successful listing for given WMUs. Viewing a successful listing (the names and street addresses of hunters were blocked out) has generally satisfied these groups. In each case, a fair percentage of tags had been allocated to locals, or at least residents of northern Ontario.

The issue of what physical area should be regarded as local also received debate at most meetings where local area preference was subject to comment. To some hunters, local area meant within the town. To other hunters it meant within a certain number of miles of the town, or within the WMU. Still, other hunters felt that their preference should be based regionally - northeastern Ontario as an example. At several meetings there was debate on what constituted "northern Ontario". Although hunters in Sault Ste. Marie, for example, felt they were "northerners", hunters in communities farther north felt the Soo should be considered southern Ontario. As well, hunters who resided too far east or west of a given area or region were not

considered northerners. It was also suggested that the government definition of northern/southern Ontario was valid (roughly, northern Ontario is north of the French/Mattawa River system).

An interesting footnote to this issue occurred at one meeting in northeastern region. Apparently, some local residents of the area travel to northwestern Ontario to hunt deer, where they may be considered non-locals. Would they consider it fair to be discriminated against in any deer allocation, should geographic preference be considered for the deer resource allocation?

At the London meeting, one hunter suggested that southern hunters should be given preference over northern hunters, because southern hunters travel further, spend more, and have a more restricted period in which to hunt.

Another related issue is the extent of preference, in terms of to whom it applies. It is probable that immediate relatives of local residents or former residents will request preference if it is given to local residents. Also, would year-round residency be mandatory for preference to apply or would residency and/or land ownership be necessary?

It is anticipated that the 1992 group application system will result in more tags being allocated to residents of northern Ontario. This will occur because many southern hunters do not feel it is worth going moose hunting unless they have at least one adult tag in their party. In order to ensure that they will receive at least one tag, they will apply in groups and these groups will be large enough to ensure a tag in most WMUs. This scenario makes more tags available to smaller parties and individuals, characteristics associated with northern moose hunters.

It will not be satisfactory to those who insist on having an adult moose in their freezer every year. No system can satisfy this demand without resulting in a decline of the herd.

Draw Preference for Northern Ontario Residents

PROS:

- popular with hunters in the north,

CONS:

- may be unpopular with southern hunters,
- may result in an increase in harvest due to traditionally higher success of locals,
- for consistency, preference for locals may have to be extended to other hunting draws/regulations,
- violates an established principle of equitable wildlife allocation to all residents of the Province.

2.5.3 Disabled Hunters

Preference for disabled hunters was requested at two meetings and in one written submission. A brief has also been received by the Ministry of Natural Resources in Thunder Bay requesting an earlier season for disabled hunters. An earlier season may be beneficial to disabled hunters because of the warmer temperatures. Cold weather places limits on the ability of disabled hunters to enjoy the moose hunt. Although early archery seasons exist, the request has been made for a regular gun season.

Introduce an Earlier Season Opening for Disabled Moose Hunters

PROS:

- would benefit disabled hunters,
- would probably not have significant negative impact on the resource.

CONS:

- may be considered by able hunters to be unfair,
- may conflict with archery hunters in some WMUs.

2.6 Draw Results

The general impression from discussions with hunters was that the degree of support a hunter feels for the moose draw is directly proportional to the frequency with which the hunter has been successful in the draw.

2.6.1 Frequency of Draw Success

In northwestern Ontario where hunters generally receive a tag every second year they are content to leave the draw alone. In the northcentral region where, depending on the specific WMU, some hunters receive a tag every second year and other hunters are successful less frequently, opinion is divided. In northern and northeastern Ontario where the chances of success in almost all WMUs is fairly low, hunter support for the draw is almost non-existent. In the southern part of the province hunters seem to hold a more benign opinion of the draw. This may be due to the characteristic large party size, in which at least one member is usually successful in the draw.

As with other government programs, giving each moose hunter the same chance of receiving a tag is deemed to be a fair system. The successful applicant frequency distribution is that most hunters receive a tag every 3 - 4 years, some hunters (fewer) receive a tag every second year, and other hunters (fewer still) have never received a tag. To moose hunters, the draw is not fair if their frequency of success varies from another hunter they know or have heard about.

The old axiom that it is not possible to please all of the people all of the time is especially true when referring to moose hunters. The government must therefore be prepared to accept, as it has in the past, that some hunters will never consider any sort of moose resource allocation system as fair. It is the responsibility of the government to be aware of moose hunter concerns and make considered, responsible decisions regarding moose allocation.

2.6.2 The Draw Application Form

Complaints about the draw application form were not numerous during the review. They should have been more numerous because, after simple draw odds, application errors account for 100% of the reasons why hunters are unsuccessful in the draw. Hunters forget to apply, they apply late, they do not fill in all of the required information on the application form, and they sometimes trust delivery of the application to unreliable methods. Wildlife Policy Branch reports that in greater than 95% of the cases of hunters who claim to have gone a number of years (i.e. >5+ years) without success in the draw, these other factors have usually been the cause.

Hunters generally do not accept these reasons as valid explanations for their lack of success in the draw because they consider them to be bureaucratic problems which are irrelevant next to the fact that they have gone six years without a tag.

The draw application form could be larger and the print easier to read. As well, shaded "office only" boxes would reduce confusion about what to fill out and what to leave blank.

A Sportsman's card system (see section 2.8) could reduce the incidence of an applicant not receiving a tag due to application errors.

2.6.3 Publishing Results of Draw (names of successful applicants)

A listing of the approximately 30,000 successful draw applicants is produced after the draw. This listing is distributed to MNR district/area offices and moose hunters can request confirmation that they have been successful by producing their moose licence number. The licence number is required in order to protect the privacy of those hunters who do not wish their success in the draw made public.

Since 1983, several local hunter organizations have accused the government of fixing the draw such that only hunters from "down south" or non-locals, receive tags. Some District offices have demonstrated using a successful listing with hunter names blocked-out, that this is not the case. However, during the course of the review, it was suggested that one way to make the draw results appear more fair would be to publish the names of successful draw applicants in the local print media:

Publish Names of Successful Draw Applicants

PROS:

- hunters would "see" the draw results and may perceive the draw as more fair,

CONS:

- some hunters would view this as a violation of their privacy,
- would contravene the Freedom of Information Act and Protection of Personal Privacy legislation.

2.6.4 Use of Computers for Draws

There was a marked distrust evident during the review for anything occurring in Toronto, Queen's Park, and computers. With respect to the latter, the draw is conducted on a computer because it is inexpensive, fast and accurate. Alternatives to using a computer to operate the draw have not seriously been considered but they do exist. For example, the draw could be conducted manually using barrel drums or a lottario-type ping-pong-ball-dropping-out-of-a-machine setup:

Conduct Draw Manually

PROS:

- perceived as fair

CONS:

- inefficient and statistically unfair (diminishing probability of receiving a tag with each application drawn out of drum [current draw ensures each application has the same chance of success]),
- would take several weeks to run the draw,
- difficult to prove to a hunter that his/her name was in the barrel.

2.6.5 Timing of Draws

Currently, season dates are announced in March, the draw deadline is in May 15, and the draw results are sent out in late July. All of these dates are inconvenient for many moose hunters who must book their holidays with their employers in January or February.

There is no reason, other than a vague connection with annual cycles in which moose population data become available, why season dates are announced in March rather then three months earlier in December or January.

With the current application method, the date at which hunters are notified of the draw results is going to be approximately 60 days after the draw deadline. Pooling, keypunching and the draw require this time period. Keypunching and verification require the most amount of time. Currently, two daily shifts use all the existing funding and computer work station space. An increase in keypunching efficiency would not significantly reduce the time period between applying for the draw and receiving the results.

The draw deadline is in May because of the quota setting process. The annual aerial inventories of moose are not completed until mid-February and the recommended quotas are therefore not calculated until late February-early March. In March, the quotas are subject to review and approval and the Moose Hunter's Fact Sheet is printed. The Fact Sheets and licenses are distributed to issuers in late March - early April and hunters then have about 5 weeks to purchase their licence and submit their application to the draw. Since 1984, the draw deadline has been set at 5 pm, May 15, or the closest business day. By keeping the draw deadline consistent, hunters have become accustomed to the process and acutely aware of the May date.

A sportsmen's card system, which could include electronic optical recognition of draw applications, would eliminate the need for keypunching and the draw results could potentially be released in June.

2.7 Licence/Application Fee

In 1983, it was not necessary for a hunter to purchase a moose licence before obtaining a draw application form. In that first year of the draw, more applications were received than there were estimated moose hunters in the province at that time. Applications may have been received from persons who were not serious moose hunters, and this reduced the chance of success in the draw for more serious applicants. In 1984, prepurchase of a licence became mandatory prior to obtaining an application, and the number of draw applications was reduced from 1983 by 12,000. By retaining the prepurchase requirement, draw applicants may actually benefit because they do not have to compete for tags with non-serious moose hunter applications.

Hunters during the review often complained of having to put out their money ($28.36 with GST in 1991) in May, four months before moose season, and then they may be unsuccessful and feel the money was wasted. Several hunters suggested that the government was using the draw system to obtain money in the spring, accumulate interest over the summer, and not spend it until moose season in the fall. Hunters also complained that if they were unsuccessful in the draw, they felt the money was wasted and they should be entitled to a licence refund.

Currently, under the Game and Fish Act, the Minister can authorize refund of a hunting licence if the purchaser is deceased or medically incapacitated at the time of the hunt.

Alternatively, a refundable application fee could be introduced which would also solve the problem of speculative applications and address hunter's monetary concerns.

Introduce a Refundable Draw Application Fee

PROS:

- addresses some hunters concerns,

CONS:

- administratively extremely complex and costly,
- most applicants purchase a licence regardless of draw success,.

2.7.1 Government Use of Licence Revenue

Hunters are concerned about how the money they pay for their moose licenses is allocated. All funds are currently received by the Ministry of Revenue, and allocated according to provincial budgets. Earmarked funds are uncommon. Many hunters still appear to be under the impression that the resident fishing licence revenue is allocated and dispersed directly by Fisheries Policy Branch. In fact, the money is received by the Ministry of Revenue. The Government ensures that most funds equal to the fish licence revenue is allocated to fisheries management, but this is technically not a case of earmarked funds.

In fiscal year 1989-90, 122,029 moose licenses were sold for revenue of $3,376,137.85 (the province spends approximately $5 million\year on moose management related activities). The government actually spends more money on moose management than it collects in revenue from moose licenses. The value of the hunt is in it's surrounding economic activity, which was estimated at $53.7 million in 1989, most of this occurring in northern Ontario.

2.8 Sportsmen's Card

In a Sportsman's Card System, each hunter is issued a "credit-card" with the hunter's name (and other data if desired, such as date-of-birth) and a unique identification number. The hunter would use the card to purchase hunting licenses and apply for game draws. Several other jurisdictions, notably Quebec, use a sportsman's card to great benefit. In Ontario, the idea has been considered off and on for almost 20 years but a proposal has never been developed due to start-up costs.

A Sportsmen's Card system was suggested by hunters at the very first review meeting (Hearst) and was subsequently mentioned at 10 other meetings. When queried as to whether they would be willing to accept a user-pay scenario for issuing the card, most hunters responded to this positively.

Many District Offices have stopped selling hunting and fishing licences because of the staff time and administrative burden. Hunters at several public meetings identified this loss of contact with

MNR staff to be detrimental to MNR-hunter relations. The ease with which licenses can be sold with a sportsmen's card system might entice some MNR offices to once again sell licenses.

Due to the reliance of most individuals on bank credit cards to manage personal finances, the use of a sportsmen's card may reassure those hunters who doubt the draw's technical fairness.

Introduce a Sportsmen's Card

PROS:

- would improve the efficiency of licence issuing,
- would reduce the turnaround time for game draw application/results,
- would reduce errors on game draw applications,
- hunters would perceive game draws as being more fair,
- hunters would be carrying a physical symbol of affiliation and cooperation with each other and with the MNR,
- lower administrative costs once established,
- could be used by other MNR branches to decrease administration costs.

CONS:

- start-up costs,
- possibility of "another government number" complaints,

2.9 The Game Seal

Game and Fish Act regulations stipulate that the game seal provided to each licence holder must be attached to the moose carcass immediately after the animal has been killed. The game seal has printed on it the licence number of the hunter. This procedure permits enforcement of licensing regulations. For example, when a conservation officer happens upon a sealed carcass, he can determine if the hunter whose licence number appears on the seal was legally entitled to harvest the animal.

The physical type of game seal has long been an issue with hunters and many different seals have been used. The current seal, made of a cloth/paper mixture called tyvek and fastened using a metal "ski-tag" wire, is the most effective seal yet employed. MNR has tried using box car and plastic seals but the problems associated with these seals outweighed their advantages. For example, the plastic seals were very sturdy but some hunters tried the locking mechanism out before actually using the seal, to make sure it worked, and they found themselves with a permanently locked, useless seal. Complaints with the current system stem mostly from one year when the tyvek material was faulty.

Hunters complained that the seal became damaged or was torn off the carcass as the animal was being removed from the bush. Current Ministry moose hunter education efforts recommend that the carcass be quartered at the kill site and this procedure would result in fewer damaged seals, as well as better quality meat.

2.10 Seasons

Hunters traditionally favour the restriction of season length and timing over more direct methods of controlling moose harvests, however, as previously discussed, these methods were ineffective in increasing the moose population. Some hunters expressed concern that the season was too early, too late, or too long, as the case may be. Season length and timing will still be adjusted where they are considered to be of detriment to increasing the moose population in specific WMUs.

Bows-only seasons were common topics of comment during the review. The MNR's policy regarding new bow seasons is that they will be introduced in WMUs when there is enough documented support for them. Gun hunters are hesitant to support additional bow seasons because they believe they will reduce gun tag quotas. Bow hunters counter by pointing out the additional opportunities created by bow hunting and the fact that some gun hunters will take up bow hunting, which would compensate for slightly lower draw odds caused by lost gun quotas.

Bow hunters have traditionally experienced very good odds in the draw due to demanding nature of the sport and the lower success rate. As bow hunting increases in popularity, and bow hunters' success rates increase, these odds are decreasing in some WMUs and bow hunters believe the MNR should compensate by increasing the quota.

Another sub-issue is the allocation of surplus archery tags to "gun hunters". Archery hunters believe that gun hunters (those who apply only for gun tags in the draw) should not be entitled to receive surplus archery tags because the timing of the allocation does not permit the gun hunter to train, prior to the hunt. Archers believe these hunters are prone to use inferior equipment and have a high incidence of wounding animals, which reflects badly on all archers. This argument is related to the general support which exists for a mandatory bow hunter training course.

2.11 Replacement of Tag (diseased moose scenario)

Current regulations specify that a hunter can only place his seal on one animal. If that animal is determined to be unfit for human consumption due to disease or infection, the carcass is usually disposed of. Hunters at three meetings requested a change to this policy. They believed that a replacement seal should be issued and the hunter should be permitted to take another animal.

Issue a Replacement Seal if a "Diseased" Moose is Harvested

PROS:

- will be perceived as a fair policy to most hunters,
- negligible impact on the herd.

CONS:

- most wild animals, including moose, are usually infected with some parasites or disease and it would be difficult to set standards for degree of infection before a new seal was issued,
- a "diseased" moose on the hoof is usually indistinguishable from "healthy" animals and therefore offers the same recreation opportunity,
- would contribute to overharvests if seals are given out until all hunters are happy with the quality of meat harvested.

2.12 Regulations

Hunters complained frequently during the review of being over-regulated. The introduction of the selective harvest system suddenly required that hunters be able to "know the difference" between calf and adult cow moose, or refrain from shooting. The lack of legal adult moose party hunting from 1983-87, and the decision on the part of many hunters to party hunt regardless, made many hunters feel as though they always were, or were unknowingly, breaking Game and Fish Act regulations. Restrictive tag quotas in some areas resulted in hunters not being able to hunt for adult moose, and required that they only hunt for calves which many hunters did not feel to be legitimate big game quarry.

When party hunting for adult moose was permitted again, starting in 1988, hunters did not feel the MNR did a good job communicating the specific party hunting rules. From the hunters' perspective, MNR's own Conservation Officer staff did not interpret the regulations with universal consistency. Conservation Officers, to be fair, were asked to enforce laws which were difficult to enforce. The combination of uncertain hunters and increasingly business-like Conservation Officers seriously undermined hunter-CO relations, which had traditionally been one of cooperation and respect.

The specific regulation referred to by hunters most often in the review was the one stipulating that the hunter who was issued the adult tag must be physically in the field at the time the animal is harvested, and he must be the one who places the seal on the animal. Hunters felt that, particularly if they are to be restricted to one tag per party by the group application system, any member of the party should be able to legally place the seal on the animal.

Change Regulations to Permit Any "Party Member"* to Seal Adult Animal

PROS:

- will be perceived as fair by most hunters,
- will increase number of hunters applying as "groups",

CONS:

- will increase hunter success rate which may result in lower tag quotas in some WMUs.

* "Party Member" = one of the hunter's who submits his application with others in a "group" in the group application system.

2.13 MNR-Hunter Relations and Communication

Many hunters view the MNR negatively. They perceive the MNR's only interest is in regulating their activities. The type of contact that hunters who hold these beliefs have is generally restricted to published information and contact with Conservation Officers in the field.

Apparently, few hunters at the meetings were aware of the draw statistics published by the MNR prior to each year's draw and hunters were sceptical about the MNR's ability to assess both moose population levels and hunter harvests. These are basically communication problems; a general attitude prevailed that the MNR was doing a poor job in communicating with hunters.

The Ministry has placed a great deal of emphasis on collecting and interpreting biological data about the moose resource. It has used modern wildlife management strategies to develop harvest control program and it has introduced efficient harvest allocation methods. However, the MNR has not developed effective hunter communication strategies.

Currently, the Ministry communicates with moose hunters by issuing news releases and fact sheets. Only one mailing is performed each year - to notify hunters of the draw results. An Advanced Moose Hunter Education Course has been developed and will be in use by the fall of 1991. The (cooperatively produced) materials for this course, such as the Moose in Ontario - Books I and II, and the video Moose Hunt - A Guide to Success are available from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

MNR could improve communication with hunters by publishing and distributing moose population, harvest and hunter data more frequently, but this obviously is not enough. Hunters are not obtaining and reading information that is already available to them. Regular information meetings could be held by district offices. Standing district MNR/hunter committees could be developed and could meet on a set schedule similar to most hunt clubs. Television information has been employed by some northern districts, apparently with some degree of success.

In Gogama District a Moose Hunter Information station is operated for several days just prior to the opening of the season.

2.14 Poaching

The subject of poaching was touched on at most meetings. There is a universal abhorrence of this activity although some hunters said that the MNR is forcing moose hunters to become poachers by over-regulating them.

2.15 Native Harvest

At nine meetings, and in 26 written submissions, the issue of native rights with respect to harvesting moose was negatively commented on. Hunters complained that natives harvest moose in any season and with no regard for season or quantity. They also suggested natives generally waste at least some of the carcass. Hunters made reference to an apparently increasingly common activity known as "green-carding" whereby a resident pays to hunt with a native - the resident actually shoots and keeps the carcass but the native is there in case a C.O. appears on the scene, at which time the native claims that he harvested the animal.

2.16 Hunting in Provincial Parks

The issue of hunting in Provincial Parks was not a major issue in the review. It was mentioned once at the Huntsville meeting. The issue was also raised at several meetings in the context of native hunting in Algonquin.

2.17 Habitat Management

Negative comments on clear cuts and spraying were received at eight meetings and in 16 written submissions. Review participants questioned timber harvesting practices with respect to the size of clear cuts and/or the effects of spraying on moose. Hunters generally believe that clear cuts are bad for moose and are too big. Hunters generally seem to believe that spraying negatively affects moose either by ingestion or by changing their habitat, and that it reduces hunting opportunities in sprayed areas.

2.18 Tourism Allocation

Hunters at 12 meetings and in 17 written submissions made negative comments regarding the allocation of adult moose tags to outfitters. Since this review does not include the tourism industry allocation, these comments were duly noted but not actively discussed. Related issues here are: the percent of the harvest allocated to the tourism industry in specific WMUs; non-resident hunting; outfitters "selling" tags; access road closures to protect tourism industry.

3.0 APPENDIX I - The 1992 Group Application System

The following is an outline of how the moose draw group application system will function in 1992. The premise of the system is that a party of hunters is satisfied if they have one adult validation tag. The objectives of the system are to accomplish a distribution of tags such that the number of parties with one tag is increased without reducing the chance of an individual applicant receiving a tag. The system maintains preference pooling for all applicants.

1) Hunters may apply in groups of up to eight applicants. The more preference pool (Pool 1) applicants in a group, the better the group's chances of getting a tag (the preference pool consists of applicants in the draw who applied the previous year and were unsuccessful in obtaining a tag - all other applicants are in the second, or non-preference pool - the draw allocates tags on a random basis to preference pool applicants first, and then to other applicants). Hunters will be encouraged to apply in what is realistically their party size. Hunters may still apply individually.

2) Applicants will apply as a group by placing their individual applications in an envelope supplied by the ministry, and submitting the envelope to the draw by the current means (postal system or drop-off at a District Office). The outside of the envelope will have instructions and places for up to eight applicants to fill in their application numbers, and one set of two choices of WMU and type of animal and season for the whole group.

3) Once the envelope is received by the MNR, the applications in the envelope will be individually pooled and then keypunched with the group choices indicated on the envelope.

4) At each of the 16 possible steps in the computer draw program (e.g. Pool 1, Choice 1, Bull, Gun Season or Pool 2, Choice 2, Cow, Bow Season) in each WMU, the program will calculate the ratio of applicants to tags. Tags will be allocated on a random basis, first to group applicants whose group size is equal to or larger, and than the ratio, and then to other applicants. This means that if the ratio is four then all groups with four or more applicants in that category will receive one tag.

5) When one member of a group is successful, all other applicants in that group will be removed from the eligible applicant file and placed in the unsuccessful file. This will ensure that only one applicant per group is successful in obtaining a tag.

6) The individual who is successful in the group will have an adult validation tag issued in his/her name. Current party hunting regulations will remain in effect so groups may recombine after the draw as is currently common.

4.0 APPENDIX II - MEETING\WRITTEN SUBMISSION ISSUE SUMMARIES

HEARST

Comments

About 200 hunters attended this meeting. Most of the speakers made presentations in french and there was no simultaneous translation. These presentations were recorded and translated for use in this report.

Eight speakers felt that the most desirable system would be a fixed ratio system, whereby 2-3 hunters would be able to harvest one moose and then their hunt would be over. Two hunters expressed concern over the ability of the group to use the tag if the successful member was unable to hunt. One hunter suggested a multi-year pooling system. Two hunters felt that local area residents should be given preference in the draw. Seven hunters complained about their lack success in the current draw. There were three negative comments on the MNR's current moose publications. There were two negative comments on MNR's enforcement regulations enforcement policies. Three speakers suggested using the SIN number for a sportsman's card system. There were four questions on the group application system and three positive comments about the system.

Other comments and suggestions were: that the information prepared for the review meeting was inadequate; there should be moose tags made available for the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve; moose carcasses were being found in the bush during hunt; the season closing dates should be the same for all WMU's; hunters should only be permitted to hunt in the WMU in which they applied for a tag; there is a need for increased predator control; there should exist a mandatory bow-hunter education course for first-time bow hunters; should not rush into new draw system; all hunters should be surveyed regarding changes; first-time draw applicants should receive a tag; several negative comments suggesting that southern Ontario hunters receive tags because they spend money in the north.

KAPUSKASING

Comments

About 100 hunters attended this meeting. Two hunters suggested a multi-year pooling system. Four hunters suggested local area preference in the draw. There were four negative comments on the draw and the frequency of draw success. Three positive comments regarding a sportsmen's card system. Five negative comments regarding MNR's moose hunter publications. Three hunters expressed concern that moose which are harvested and found to be heavily infested with parasites such that the meat is inedible, should be given a second adult tag. Negative comments were also made regarding MNR's enforcement policies and native harvesting of moose.

Other comments and suggestions included: several questions regarding the group application system (including two negative comments); two questions on party hunting regulations; two comments regarding southern Ontario telling the north what to do; need for predator control; one comment against party hunting.

WHITE RIVER

Comments

The meeting started late due to weather conditions. About 30 hunters attended this meeting - the smallest turnout of the review.

There were four questions regarding the group application system. Four hunters favoured local area resident preference in the draw. Negative comments were recorded regarding MNR's moose hunter publications, native harvesting of moose, clear cutting and the tourism industry allocation.

Other comments and suggestions included: two positive remarks regarding hunter education; a suggestion that surplus tags should be "banked" for future years; questions on the seriousness of some draw applicants; the poor manners of southern Ontario hunters; MNR should have a presence in Marathon; concern over the weighting of southern vs. northern Ontario hunter's comments during the review; a suggestion to improve the selective harvest system by having age and sex specific tags (e.g. yearling-bull tags).

KENORA

Comments

About 100 hunters attended this meeting. There were three questions on the proposed group application system and one on party hunting regulations. Several hunters favoured a fixed-ratio system or wide open moose hunting. Positive comments were also made regarding local area draw preference, the current draw and frequency of draw success. Negative comments included native harvesting of moose and enforcement policies.

Other comments and suggestions included: non-residents should be in the draw and not receive tags from outfitters; more Conservation Officers are needed; the problems in this area are different then in Eastern Ontario; strong support via show of hands to retain the existing draw system; the MNR should address anti-hunters; the season opening should be later for non-locals.

THUNDER BAY

Comments

About 600 hunters attended this meeting. The meeting was quite lively due to the placement and simultaneous use by hunters of four floor microphones. A strong anti-OFAH sentiment prevailed at this meeting.

Positive comments were made regarding a fixed ratio system, the group application system, the transfer of tag among group members, a multi-year pooling system, draw preference for local residents, seniors and disabled hunters, a sportsman's card and he tourist industry allocation. Negative comments were made regarding the group system, current draw results and frequency of success, native hunting of moose, and the tourism industry allocation.

Other comments and suggestions included: three questions on the group system; a negative comment about access road closures; an
accusation that OFAH puts pressure on MNR to allocate tags to southern Ontario hunters; should not permit guns on ATV's and snow machines; should not permit the carrying of a firearm during the closed season; negative comment on non-resident hunting.

DRYDEN

Comments

About 100 hunters attended this meeting. There were eight questions on the group application system and the focus of the meeting quickly became the effect of the group system on local applicants.

There were negative comments about "gun hunters" using crossbows during the archery season, MNR publications for moose hunters and the timing of the draw.

Positive comments were made regarding a fixed ratio system, the group application system, local area resident preference, draw results and more archery seasons.

TIMMINS

Comments

The meeting was well attended by about 400 hunters.

Negative comments were presented regarding the results of the selective harvest program, the group application system, the draw and frequency of success in the draw, a sportsman's card, timing of licence purchase, enforcement policies, native harvesting of moose, clear cuts and spraying and the tourism industry. Positive comments were received for a sportsman's card system, a fixed ratio system, the group system, multi-year pooling, local area preference and the tourism industry.

Other comments and suggestions included: three negative comments regarding MNR's moose population and harvest data; hunters are shooting wrong moose and wasting carcass; divide the season into two different seasons with separate tag quotas; need more moose hunter education; one negative comment regarding party hunting; two negative comments regarding access road closures; negative comment that the proposed group system is foregone conclusion; concern about illegitimate applications from non-serious moose hunters in the draw; problems with hide

collection; a line-up system should be employed to allocated tags; there should be an any animal draw tag; MNR should move the season timing out of the rut to reduce the moose harvest; the government gives tags to southern Ontario hunters because they know they have a lower success rate; the licence fee should be increased.

HUNTSVILLE

Comments

About 300 hunters attended this meeting. The Muskoka-Parry Sound Hunt Camp Association was well represented and deer concerns were evident.

There were four questions regarding the group application system. positive comments were made about a fixed ratio system, the group system, sportsman's card, and more archery seasons. Negative comments were made about the draw results and frequency of success, clear cuts and the tourism industry allocation.

Other comments and suggestions included: increase hunter education efforts; complaint regarding the when hunting regulation summary is published (June is too late); one complaint about being misinformed by a licence issuer; there should be a one week grace period for late applications; there should be a "camp tag"; comment against ban on hunting in Blackstone Harbour Park; concern regarding possible closure of Regional Office in Huntsville; conduct draw on TV; concern about animal rights activists spoiling draw; MNR should give more money for deer feeding.

PEMBROKE

Comments

About 450 hunters attended this meeting. There were five questions on the group application system. Positive comments were made favouring a fixed ratio system, the group system, transfer of tag among group members, local area resident preference and a sportsman's card system. Negative comments were made about local area preference, the draw results and frequency of success, timing of licence purchase and the tourism industry.

Other comments and suggestions included: one positive comment regarding moose hunter education; support for "camp preference"; want x number of tags/camp based on number of hunters; season is too long; use health card for draw applications/licence issuing; draw for cow moose only; conserve calves; separate tag quota for groups and individuals.

CORNWALL

Comments

About 300 hunters attended the meeting. There were several questions regarding the group system. Positive comments were made regarding a fixed ratio system, the group system, the

frequency of draw success and MNR moose hunter publications. Negative comments were made regarding the game seal, public communication of regulations, clear cuts and the tourist industry allocation.

Other comments and suggestions: concern regarding access road closures; want a bull and cow tag for every party; concern about carcasses being left in bush; want increasing preference with group size; close or move season dates.

LONDON

Comments

A good turnout of about 350 hunters at this meeting. There were about five questions regarding the group application system. Positive comments were made regarding controlled hunts, fixed ratio systems, the group system, multi-year pooling, local area resident preference, preference for disabled hunter, draw results, sportsman's card and more archery seasons. Negative comments were about the group system, the draw and frequency of draw success, timing of licence purchase, the game seal, communication of regulations to hunters, enforcement policies, native harvesting of moose and the tourist industry allocation.

Other comments and suggestions included: request for a camp licence; keep the allocation systems simple; request to permit use of bow tag in gun season; concern about animal rights activists; MNR should publish names of successful draw applicants.

TORONTO

Comments

About 90 hunters attended this meeting. There were eight questions regarding the group system. Positive comments were made regarding a fixed ratio system, the group application system, transferring the tag among group members, multi-year pooling, and a sportsman's card system. Negative comments related to the draw and frequency of success, MNR moose hunter publications, communication of regulations, C.O./Hunter relations, clear cuts and the tourist industry allocation.

Other comments and suggestions included: want mandatory reporting of harvest by hunters; want a camp tag; MNR should rethink population targets; non-resident season should open later; send moose hunter fact sheet to all hunters by mail; don't permit individual applications in group system; don't sell licenses after season is open.

SUDBURY

Comments

This was the second largest meeting; about 550 hunters attended. Excellent comments from OFAH Big Game Chairman, Doug Ogston, and Gerry Courtemanch. There were many questions regarding the group system.

Positive comments were made regarding the selective harvest system, the group system, a fixed ratio system, transfer of tag among group members, multi-year pooling, preference for seniors, a sportsman's card system, and more archery seasons. Negative comments related to the group system, the current draw and frequency of draw success, a sportsman's card, timing of the draw, enforcement policies, native harvesting of moose, clear cuts and the tourism industry.

Other comments and suggestions included: increase the licence fee to get rid of non-serious applicants in draw; want shorter and staggered seasons; need mandatory moose hunter education; - don't introduce group system until all hunters understand it; negative comment regarding use of ATV's in bush; need more predator control.

SAULT STE. MARIE

Comments

About 100 hunters attended this meeting. There were four questions regarding the group application system. Positive comments related to the selective harvest system, the group system, tag transfer among group members, local area preference, the draw results and a sportsman's card system. Negative comments related to fixed ratio systems, the group system, the current draw, government use of licence fee revenue, the timing of draws, the harvest of moose by natives, clear cuts and the tourism industry.

Other comments and suggestions included: MNR should implement a mandatory moose hunter education course; introduce the group system only when hunters understand it.

Written Submissions - Additional Comments

(Approximately 230 written submissions were received during the review.)

- need more road access
- don't trust MNR's moose population estimates
- notify hunters of areas that have been clear-cut or sprayed
- provide an any-sex tag for bow hunters
- need more muzzleloader seasons
- additional meetings should have been held in: North Bay, Geraldton, Smith's Falls, Ear Falls, Ottawa, Kitchener-Waterloo

- need more Conservation Officers
- should restrict hunters from southern Ontario to tourist industry
- surplus tags should be "banked"
- need stiffer fines for poaching
- close cut-over areas to hunting
- use helicopters to increase accuracy of aerial moose inventories
- promote WMU's with surplus tags
- need mandatory reporting
- reassess moose population WMU targets
- provide a "camp tag"
- ban cross-bows
- need mandatory shooting proficiency tests
- give preference in group system based on group size
- increase licence fee to reduce draw applications from non-serious moose hunters
- ban the use of dogs for moose hunting
- need more information on moose population
- want bull-only seasons
- want better maps
- any-sex tag for party size of six or greater
- no licence fee for seniors
- tag should be sex and age specific
- negative comment on government use of aircraft during hunt
- don't allocate surplus bow tags to gun hunters
- more money should be allocated for moose aerial inventories
- hunters should not be permitted to hunt after they have harvested their moose - 4+
- need mandatory moose hunter education
- implement group system in WMU's where it is needed only.

- End -